UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/ICEF/1996/10 (Part II)
29 February 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
Executive Board
Second regular session 1996
9-12 April 1996
Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

FOR ACTION

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Annual report to the Economic and Social Council

SUMMARY

The present report responds to Executive Board decision 1995/5 (E/ICE/1995/9/Rev.1) on annual reports to the Economic and Social Council which sets out the format and content of that part of the annual report of the Executive Director of UNICEF to the Executive Board which also serves as the report to the Economic and Social Council. It contains the following sections requested by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1994/33 of 28 July 1994: (a) a section outlining measures taken in the implementation of the provisions of the triennial policy review of operational activities (General Assembly resolutions 44/211 of 22 December 1989, 47/199 of 22 December 1992 and 50/120 of 20 December 1995); and (b) a section on activities and measures undertaken within the designated theme(s) for the high-level meeting of the operational activities segment. By its resolution 1995/50 of 28 July 1995, the Council decided that in 1996 the high-level meeting of the operational activities segment should focus on strengthening collaboration between the United Nations development system and the Bretton Woods institutions in the areas of social and economic development, at all levels, including the field level.

The present report further responds to Council resolution 1995/51 of 28 July 1995 which requests the heads of United Nations funds and programmes to report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1996, through their Executive Boards, on the steps taken to refine and effectively apply procedures for monitoring and evaluation activities, strengthening national capacity, improving national participation in evaluation and promoting greater collaboration in evaluation, as well as improving the cost-effectiveness of administrative services.

Finally, the present report responds to Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56 of 28 July 1995 on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

* E/ICEF/1996/9.

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
INTRODUCTION		1	3
I.	FOLLOW-UP TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS 44/211, 47/199 AND 50/120	2 - 27	3
	A. Introduction	2 - 4	3
	B. Coordination	5 - 12	4
	C. Programme matters	13 - 19	5
	D. Management, personnel and finance matters	20 - 27	7
II.	FOLLOW-UP TO RESOLUTION 1995/50 OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL: COLLABORATION WITH THE BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS	28 - 41	9
	A. Introduction	28 - 30	9
	B. Collaboration in policy matters	31 - 34	9
	C. Collaboration in operational activities at the country level	35 - 41	10
III.	FOLLOW-UP TO RESOLUTION 1995/51 OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL	42 - 51	12
	A. Introduction	42	12
	B. Monitoring and evaluation	43 - 46	12
	C. Strengthening national capacity for management and coordination of international assistance	47	13
	D. Improving national participation in the evaluation of United Nations operational activities	48	13
	E. Promoting greater collaboration in evaluation	49 - 50	13
	F. Scope for improving the cost-effectiveness of administrative services	51	14
IV.	FOLLOW-UP TO RESOLUTION 1995/56 OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL: HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES	52 - 66	14
	A. Introduction	52 - 53	14
	B. Role and operational responsibilities in humanitarian assistance	54 - 55	15
	C. Capacity to respond	56 - 59	15
	D. Resources: mobilization and allocation	60 - 61	16
	E. Coordination	62 - 64	16
	F. Evaluation and training	65 - 66	17
V.	EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTION	67	17

INTRODUCTION

1. The present report reflects a common format agreed upon by the secretariats of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Food Programme (WFP). It takes into account views expressed by delegations speaking on the follow-up to decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council at the first regular session of the Executive Board in 1996 and should be read in conjunction with the reports to the Council of the other funds and programmes and the relevant sections of the annual report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council.

I. FOLLOW-UP TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS 44/211, 47/199 AND 50/120

A. Introduction

2. During 1995, UNICEF continued implementation of measures called for in the series of triennial policy reviews of operational activities carried out by the General Assembly, culminating most recently in resolution 50/120 of 20 December 1995. In this regard, the Executive Director views the triennial reviews as a continuum, providing clear and consistent direction over a multi-year period, thereby allowing for the steady building on progress made in earlier years and for consolidated reporting on implementation of the series of related and progressive resolutions.

3. UNICEF, through its implementation of operational activities resolutions, has intensified collaboration with its United Nations partner organizations, both bilaterally and collectively, particularly through the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP), the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ), the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). In 1996, an ad hoc working group of JCGP members was convened to identify responsibility for action and follow-up to each provision of General Assembly resolution 50/120, assigning it, as appropriate, to individual funds and programmes, the United Nations Secretariat, JCGP, CCPOQ and/or ACC. In addition, the United Nations Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (DPCSD), UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP, in another series of ad hoc meetings, have established a mechanism for ongoing information exchange; collaboration on reporting, including development of common formats and consistent databases; and the harmonization of Executive Board procedures and timing.

4. The Executive Director has sent an executive directive to all field offices and headquarters units, updating them on recent developments in the triennial policy review, including the provisions of General Assembly resolution 50/120, and providing practical guidance for further action on, inter alia, country-level goals and strategies, the programme approach, monitoring and evaluation, the resident coordinator system, common premises, harmonization, collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions, emergency operations and reporting. That report was one of a series the Executive Director now prepares semi-annually to update field staff on developments related to United Nations reform, operational activities and the coordinated follow-up to international conferences.

B. Coordination

Resident coordinator system

5. The resident coordinator system is now an important element in the process of country strategy and programme preparation and mid-term reviews as UNICEF, in accordance with Executive Board decision 1995/8 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1), deepens the involvement of United Nations system partners to avoid duplication and strengthen mutual support. The resident coordinator system has contributed in some degree to the development of all 40 regular country programmes of cooperation being finalized for approval during 1995-1996, although the quality of such participation remains wide. The resident coordinator system also has facilitated the role of Government in coordinating collaboration between UNICEF and key United Nations partners in country - UNDP, UNFPA, WFP, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

6. UNICEF, along with its JCGP partners, is committed to widening the pool of qualified development professionals eligible for appointment as resident coordinators/representatives and to increasing transparency of the selection process, as agreed upon by JCGP in February 1994, as well as to assisting UNDP in defining country-specific requirements for resident coordinator vacancies. In December 1995, all UNICEF representatives received a "Statement on the Role and Functioning of the Resident Coordinator System" prepared by CCPOQ, endorsed by ACC and updating an earlier statement of 1989. The role and functioning of the resident coordinator system, including consideration of the issues addressed by General Assembly resolution 50/120, is an agenda item for CCPOQ at its March 1996 meeting.

7. As of November 1995, 9 of the more than 100 serving resident coordinators came from the pool of candidates outside UNDP. UNICEF had nominated seven candidates overall, of which two were serving. The remaining seven of the nine came from UNFPA, WFP, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations. In addition, one UNICEF candidate was short-listed for a resident coordinator post. The Executive Director remains committed to increasing the number of qualified UNICEF staff serving as resident coordinators and is actively encouraging more applications from internal candidates. To this end, UNICEF is reviewing several measures: adjusting the UNICEF representative appointments cycle with a view to harmonizing it with that of UNDP; making resident coordinator assignments a regular part of the UNICEF career development stream; focusing nominations on those countries where programmes of basic social services have a particularly high priority; and sending greater numbers of UNICEF staff to UNDP/CCPOQ-sponsored advanced courses for experienced resident coordinators at the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organisation in Turin, Italy.

8. Within the resident coordinator system, and under the overall coordination of host Governments, UNICEF continues to advocate for the use of field committees and thematic groups to help guide the coordination of operational activities. These committees, when functioning well, are generally led by a representative of the organization technically and operationally best suited to specific themes and enjoying the confidence of Governments.

9. UNICEF considers that the resident coordinator system is generally working effectively and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/120. The few disputes arising at the field level are invariably due to differences of personality rather than structural problems, and JCGP members have now established more formal mechanisms to deal with those rare cases not resolved at

the country level. The training of more than 70 country coordination teams at the Turin Centre and subsequent in-country training have provided significant impetus to closer collaboration within the resident coordinator system.

Follow-up to international conferences

10. Follow-up to international conferences provides the United Nations system with an opportunity, for the first time, to collaborate system-wide in the development of significant new programmes based on shared values, goals and strategies and places coordination at the centre of the process from the very start. During 1995, UNICEF was an active participant both in the preparatory process for the World Summit for Social Development and the Fourth World Conference for Women and in the conferences themselves. These two most recent conferences further reaffirmed the goals and strategies of the World Summit for Children and gave priority to the provision of basic social services, including, in interested countries, commitment to the 20/20 approach for the allocation of budgetary and aid resources.

11. UNICEF is active in the following four inter-agency task forces established by ACC to coordinate system-wide action for providing assistance to countries in translating conference outcomes into concrete national policies and programmed: Basic Social Services for All; the Enabling Environment for Social Development; Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods for All; and the Advancement of Women. UNICEF brings a cross-cutting multisectoral approach to the follow-up and has actively promoted the concept of clearly defined goals and the development of national plans of action for setting targets at the country level. The experience of the World Summit for Children has shown that national and subnational ownership, with clearly identified numerical targets, is critical to the successful follow-up of international conferences.

Coordination at regional and subregional levels

12. While UNICEF, at the regional level, continues to promote the exchange of information, conduct of workshops and training, and transfers of lessons learned and has close working relationships with relevant regional organizations, the focus on the country programme approach has meant that country-based activities enjoy preeminence. Coordination on regional and subregional levels is particularly challenging since each of the JCGP members has a different organizational structure and style for addressing regional concerns. Nevertheless, as the Girl Child Initiative of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation has shown, JCGP partners can act effectively where distinctive and operational intergovernmental organizations exist at the regional or subregional level. There is scope for more effective advocacy and support for social development issues in regional intergovernmental forums on key issues, including implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

C. Programme matters

Country strategy note

13. UNICEF, in accordance with the guidelines issued by CCPOQ in May 1993, has supported Governments in their development of country strategy notes (CSNs). By February 1996, 9 CSNs were completed and adopted by Governments, 8 were in final draft stage, 7 were available as preliminary drafts and 19 countries were expecting completion in the near future. With 43 more countries at a very initial stage in the CSN process, there were, therefore, 86 countries with an active CSN process. Six countries do not intend to pursue a CSN, and 39 have not made a final decision.

14. UNICEF field staff have received formal guidance underlining the importance the Executive Director attaches to the CSN process and have participated in training seminars held at the Turin Centre. There has been a significant commitment of staff time and analytical capacity to support Governments and the resident coordinator. For child-related issues in the CSN, UNICEF has found Governments frequently drawing on the national programmes of action (NPAs) for implementing the commitments of the World Summit for Children. In many countries that have embarked on the CSN process, the JCGP partnership has been enriched by being able to respond to an overall government-led initiative. Follow-up to international conferences can help to strengthen the substance of CSNs. Alternatively, UNICEF continues its support of national plans and priorities in those countries choosing not to prepare CSNs.

Harmonization: programme cycles, programming procedures and rules of procedure

15. There has been notable success in the harmonization of programme cycles. In October 1995, the executive heads of the relevant JCGP organizations - UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP - sent a common letter of reaffirmation to representatives in all countries that had achieved full harmonization of programme cycles, or would do so by 1999. An alternative letter, calling for further action, was sent to field offices in those countries that had not. At the time, 27 country programmes were harmonized, 45 expected harmonization by 1999, 24 countries were possible, and 8 were special cases where harmonization was unlikely. In December 1995, the executive heads of the JCGP organizations, in a common letter to field representatives, noted the need to sustain efforts at furthering collaboration at the programming level and called for the development of a Common Country Assessment (CCA). Aiming for an operative approach by 1997, the CCA is intended to provide a cost-effective and efficient method for developing a common United Nations data system, assessment and interpretation of trends, an essential step to the further harmonization of higher order programming procedures and processes, with subsequent action through individual country programmes. The UNICEF situation analysis, developed within the overall context of the CCA, will continue to provide the essential focus on basic social services.

Programme approach

16. UNICEF has had a country programme approach for some 20 years and remains at the forefront in this area. As other JCGP partners evolve programme approaches in accordance with their respective mandates, there have been useful exchanges of views at headquarters between UNICEF and WFP, as well as between UNICEF and UNDP. In several countries, there also have been locally initiated discussions involving UNICEF and other JCGP partners. These exchanges are most productive when responding to a government initiative in which the Government and agencies draw on a common assessment of the country situation and the Government itself has introduced a programme approach. It is likely, however, that the scale of adoption of the programme approach will reflect the extent to which all JCGP members have their own programme approaches fully developed and field offices have sufficient guidance and guidelines for engagement with each other and with government authorities. JCGP partners will continue to exchange information on programme approach training.

Common guidelines at the field level for recruitment, training and remuneration of national project personnel

17. UNICEF strongly endorses the use of national expertise in the development and implementation of country programmes. Currently, over 1,000 national Professional officers are employed by UNICEF, constituting almost 40 per cent of the total Professional workforce. Indigenous technologies are actively

supported by UNICEF and introduced into other countries as appropriate. Almost 50 per cent of the experts employed by UNICEF as consultants are nationals of the countries in which they are working. Scales of remuneration and currency of payment for national consultants are aligned with those used for national staff. JCGP has prepared a report setting out elements of a common policy for payments to government staff; a joint letter on this issue will go out shortly from executive heads to field representatives.

National execution and national capacity-building

18. National execution, through government and other national partnerships, has long been a cornerstone of UNICEF programmes as a means of ensuring sustainability and allowing for a timely phasing out of UNICEF involvement. This approach to programme delivery has worked very successfully in even the most difficult of circumstances.

Agreed division of labour

19. UNICEF programmes are developed and implemented in accordance with its mandate as defined in the UNICEF Mission Statement and the relevant decisions of the Executive Board, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. They are part of country programmes approved by the Executive Board and subject to the overall coordination of host Governments and collaborative programme reviews of the resident coordinator system. This system of mandates, reviews and oversight allows for complementarity of roles and avoidance of duplication among funds and programmes while still responding to the unique circumstances in each country.

D. Management, personnel and finance matters

Management audit systems and aid accountability

20. The annual meetings of the representatives of internal audit services of the United Nations organizations and multilateral institutions provide a useful venue for the exchange of views. However, UNICEF sees a need for further streamlining of the mechanism to ensure a clear focus on issues of common concern requiring joint action.

21. The JCGP Working Group on Internal Audit Services, having concluded its task and seeing its recommendations put into practice, is now disbanded; but the exchange of views on issues of common interest and networking on particularly sensitive issues continues as needed. JCGP partners now conduct harmonized and joint auditor training. UNDP and UNICEF have shared guidelines for programme audits and the format of annual reports. While internal audit cultures remain somewhat separate, JCGP partners are working actively towards closer harmonization of approaches, with UNICEF providing active leadership on management audit issues. All JCGP partners have adopted the standards set by the Institute of Internal Auditors. UNICEF has made use of contractors to perform internal audits and is reviewing the experience with a view to replication. UNDP, UNICEF and other programmes are reviewing several innovative measures for possible action: joint management audits in areas of common concern; joint reporting; and the development of common databases on audit findings.

22. As a means of reducing the burden on their own audit functions, UNICEF and other United Nations bodies, along with the World Bank and other international financial institutions, are moving towards the harmonization of procedures for enhancing the capacity of Governments to discharge their audit functions and responsibilities effectively.

Training

23. UNICEF is extending its training efforts in team-building and interpersonal skills, targeting primarily heads of offices and other managers within UNICEF. Team-building and interpersonal abilities will be included in a new competency-based system for the appraisal of managers and other categories of staff within UNICEF. The UNICEF approach will take into account the work on competency definition being carried out by other agencies, including UNDP, UNHCR and the World Bank. In the case of managers, the competencies to be assessed will include skills in the area of inter-agency coordination.

24. Training is provided for national staff, both Professional and support, in accordance with plans developed at field offices. National staff also participate in regional or global training activities and also may have access to study leave and other external training opportunities. National counterparts, whether from Governments or other institutions, generally participate in training activities together with their UNICEF colleagues.

Gender balance in appointments

25. In 1994, UNICEF reached its target of women in 40 per cent of international Professional posts and exceeded this in the case of national Professionals. UNICEF continues to strive towards the goal of gender equity by the year 2000, but the expected slow-down in the rates of retirement and external recruitment may delay achievement.

Decentralization

26. With programmes in 144 countries and more than 85 per cent of staff located in field offices, UNICEF is already a widely decentralized organization in terms of location. The authority for the programme cycle has long been delegated to the country representative in the field. The management excellence programme is examining ways to achieve greater functional decentralization and field accountability through the further delegation of operational and financial authorities. The Executive Director anticipates that this action will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of country offices in programme delivery and monitoring.

Common premises and administrative services

27. Common premises among two or more JCGP partners exist in 52 countries, with UNICEF participating in 27, and will be extended to at least 68 countries by the end of 1997, with UNICEF participating in at least 43. While the JCGP Subgroup on Common Premises has done considerable work in analysing the viability of common premises and overseeing their actual establishment, JCGP has now approved the creation of the United Nations System for Common Premises Unit. This will ensure a more orderly programme for the development and construction of facilities, increase the skills and professionalism brought to bear in this task, allow for a more rigorous analysis of all relevant costs and benefits, establish a more consultative process and realize organizational efficiencies. UNICEF remains committed to the maximization of the number of common premises within an overall process that gives due regard to cost-effectiveness, the equitable allocation of all related costs and the retention of an organizational identity required for successful advocacy and implementation of country programmes.

II. FOLLOW-UP TO RESOLUTION 1995/50 OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL: COLLABORATION WITH THE BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS

A. Introduction

28. UNICEF has had a long and involved relationship with the Bretton Woods institutions, in particular the World Bank, centred on policy dialogue, collaborative programme development and implementation, project funding, the provision of supply services, participation in consultative group meetings and collaboration in technical working groups. UNICEF and the Bank have worked increasingly closely in recent years, and there are good prospects for even closer cooperation in the future. Accordingly, UNICEF continues to review its policies and procedures for collaboration with the World Bank based on a need to have a partnership of common interest and continued dialogue, to enhance system-wide coordination, to mobilize greater international and national support for country efforts to attain the World Summit goals for children and women, and to mobilize sufficient resources to achieve basic social goals set for the year 2000 and beyond, including through the 20/20 initiative. UNICEF recognizes the key role of the Bank as a major influence on policy formulation by Governments in the provision of multilateral funding and in overall resource mobilization for basic social services, primary health care, basic education, nutrition and water and sanitation, as well as in other priority areas such as Africa and poverty reduction.

29. UNICEF collaboration with the World Bank is taking place within the context of an overall strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and Bretton Woods institutions. In this regard, a working group composed of members from the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UNFPA, UNICEF, the United Nations Office for Project Services and DPCSD, and under the chairmanship of the Associate Administrator of UNDP, has reviewed existing arrangements for cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions, identified development cooperation needs that could benefit from intensified cooperation, as well as potential difficulties and obstacles, and has prepared recommendations to strengthen cooperation.

30. The working group concluded that there were areas and activities in which there is cooperation and that it should focus its future work on those areas and priority issues affecting the greatest number of United Nations entities. These areas would include: (a) cooperation in countries requiring major reconstruction and/or rehabilitation; (b) exchange of information and data for policy analysis; (c) exchange of information on planned research and policy issues; (d) strengthening country-level cooperation and policy coordination; (e) enhancing collaboration and exchange of information in relation to CSNs, common country assessments and country assistance papers; and (f) reporting to respective and relevant intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations and Bretton Woods institutions.

B. Collaboration in policy matters

31. UNICEF has enjoyed a long-standing dialogue with the World Bank on overall development policy issues as well as on sectoral policy matters. There is broad agreement on key overall issues such as the strengthening of efforts to meet human needs during adjustment processes, the need for an even greater focus on poverty alleviation and effective collaboration on statistics and monitoring. Both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have now accepted that protection of the vulnerable and poverty concerns should form an important part of adjustment policy. The World Bank has joined UNCTAD, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF in developing a common understanding of the 20/20 initiative. In November 1995,

the Executive Director of UNICEF was one of seven heads of programmes and/or agencies joining Mr. Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank, for a high-level discussion in Washington, D.C. (United States), on future collaboration between the United Nations system and the World Bank.

32. There are several issues deserving further discussion, including the balance and complementarity between a demand-driven economic approach to the provision of basic social services and a rights/equity approach, cost-recovery mechanisms for the provision of basic social services, the role of the World Bank conditionality in structural adjustment programmes and community empowerment. It is important that both institutions preserve their autonomy and integrity of approach and act under the overall coordination and authority of the Governments of programme countries. UNICEF will remain a "critical partner" on issues related to the survival, protection and development of children.

33. At the sectoral level, there are numerous ongoing joint activities involving the World Bank and UNICEF. The World Conference on Education for All (EFA), convened March 1990 in Jomtien, Thailand, co-sponsored by UNICEF, the World Bank, UNDP and UNESCO, adopted recommendations for the rapid expansion of basic education and literacy, with follow-up through the inter-agency EFA Forum. The Inter-Agency Steering Committee for Water Supply and Sanitation meets annually to promote coordination in policies and priorities of the World Bank and United Nations agencies active in the sector, primarily UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Environment Programme and WHO. There is a regularly scheduled series of meetings by the UNDP/UNICEF/World Bank Working Group on Poverty Monitoring aimed at establishing an information clearing-house on country-specific poverty monitoring and analysis, strengthening the link between survey data collection and use by policy makers, and developing survey instruments for field experimentation. The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, with participation from UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank, provides a model for multilateral cooperation focused on a key social and health issue. The Bank has provided particularly important support for the UNICEF/WHO-supported Bamako Initiative and is an active member along with UNICEF and others on the Task Force for Child Survival and Development, established in 1984. The World Bank, UNICEF and other United Nations agencies and programmes have joined in the development and promotion of the ACC system-wide Special Initiative on Africa for which the World Bank commitment is clear, strong and well articulated. With some 85 per cent of the resource requirements for the Initiative found in areas of the UNICEF mandate, i.e., basic health, primary education, water and sanitation, there is prima facie potential for substantive joint activities.

34. While lacking a single umbrella agreement covering operational collaboration, the World Bank and UNICEF have signed at least four bilateral aides-memoire/memoranda of understanding for collaboration on education and health in Africa. In addition, UNICEF and the World Bank have sent out several joint letters to field representatives in Africa and Latin America. The most recent occasion was in June 1995 when a letter was sent to African representatives on the subjects of policy collaboration and country-level collaboration. UNICEF participates regularly at World Bank Consultative Group meetings either as part of UNDP-led delegations or in its own right where it has a substantive contribution to make and/or at social sector sessions.

C. Collaboration in operational activities at the country level

35. There is good complementarity between the World Bank and UNICEF in field-level operations. The Bank provides a source of professional economic analysis and brings to bear substantial resources, while UNICEF provides extensive country-level experience, a capacity for advocacy and partnership

alliances, and proven field-based and low-cost programme interventions. The effectiveness of collaboration at the country level has grown in recent years, and there is now a variety of modalities for in-country collaboration in partnership with government counterparts: joint missions; collaborative programme identification and/or implementation; use of Bank funds to support UNICEF programmes; UNICEF procurement services for Bank-funded projects; and use of Bank funds for emergency programmes and post-emergency reconstruction.

36. In Zambia, the World Bank and UNICEF are working together with WHO and other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners to support the Government's comprehensive programme of health care reform and to mobilize the support of bilateral donors. In Mali, the World Bank and UNICEF are working with the European Development Fund, Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (a German bank) and the United States Agency for International Development to improve health planning at the district level as part of an integrated health, population and water supply programme. This effort has led to a dynamic network of community health systems throughout the country and is promoting community responsibility for the resolution of common health problems.

37. In April 1996, UNICEF and World Bank representatives from more than 10 African countries, along with technical support staff, are scheduled to meet in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, to promote common goals in Africa through (a) identifying and clarifying respective policy and technical perspectives in health and education; (b) strengthening links between UNICEF and Bank implementation strategies, building on comparative advantages; and (c) increasing mutal understanding of UNICEF and World Bank operational procedures and processes. UNICEF and the World Bank have collaborated on Social Investment Funds in Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras and Peru, as well as in urban basic services in Guatemala. The lessons learned are being applied to similar World Bank programmes in other countries.

38. UNICEF has used government contributions of World Bank funds to support implementation of specific activities in approved country programmes. In total, Governments in more than 10 countries have used over $60 million in Bank proceeds as contributions to UNICEF programmes in their own countries. In addition, UNICEF has provided procurement services of more than $120 million for World Bank-funded programmes in more than 15 countries. In emergency situations, the World Bank has provided grants to UNICEF - $7.0 million in Somalia and $10.5 million in Rwanda - for emergency programmes as part of consolidated United Nations system-wide appeals.

39. While UNICEF can serve as a catalyst to direct additional resources into social sector activities and provide appropriate technical support, there also will be a need to generate additional resources for approved UNICEF country programmes. UNICEF cannot use its own scarce general resources to provide programme support services sometimes required to ensure effective expenditure of World Bank resources. In addition, UNICEF must continue to operate consistently within its mandate and policy guidelines in compatibility with the country programme and the NPA goals; in accordance with its rules and regulations covering audit, financial procedures, procurement, recovery of overheads, etc.; and in the provision of effective monitoring and donor reporting. The role of UNICEF is not one of managing funds for the execution of World Bank projects, but rather one of collaboration and technical assistance in the development of programme policy and strategy, implementation, monitoring and supervision.

40. UNICEF has established an internal task force to review procedures for collaboration with the World Bank, particularly financial arrangements, and the Executive Director will keep the Executive Board informed on a regular basis of developments regarding enhanced collaboration with the World Bank. In addition,

UNICEF is studying approaches used by other United Nations programmes and funds to these same issues and will continue its active participation in relevant inter-agency groups.

41. There is considerable potential for enhanced collaboration with the World Bank. Policy dialogue, joint programme missions, collaborative programme development and implementation, joint working groups and participation in consultative groups should continue and intensify within a relationship of mutual respect and partnership. It is envisaged that there will be increased mobilization of World Bank resources into programmes to provide basic social services through activities that are well planned, coordinated, sustainable and subject to appropriate monitoring and evaluation. All cooperation with the Bank at field level must be tripartite in nature, with Governments responsible for the overall lead and direction and recognizing respective comparative advantages.

III. FOLLOW-UP TO RESOLUTION 1995/51 OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

A. Introduction

42. UNICEF has placed high priority on implementing the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/51 of 28 July 1995, taking into account General Assembly resolutions 48/162 of 20 December 1993, 45/206 of 21 December 1990 and 46/151 of 18 December 1991. The Executive Director already has reported elsewhere on how many of its provisions were taken into account, and therefore, the current submission is focused on issues related to monitoring and evaluation.

B. Monitoring and evaluation

43. During 1995, the Evaluation and Research Office of UNICEF, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/199 of 22 December 1992, continued its emphasis on (a) strengthening country-level capacity for the conduct of evaluations; (b) carrying out regional thematic analyses in coordination with regional offices; and (c) initiating global evaluations and research. At the country level, all field offices received an executive directive reaffirming the key role of evaluations as an integral part of country programme planning and giving instructions for improved planning of evaluations and making use of lessons learned. Each country office was instructed to adopt and implement an integrated monitoring, evaluation and research plan as part of the country programme. As part of the country review process, field offices are required to identify problems and undertake appropriate remedial action. Country office efforts during 1995 were focused on measuring attainment of the mid-decade goals, including the strengthening of national capacities for such measurement. All country offices provided inputs to a global evaluation database of UNICEF programmes, prepared as a CD-ROM containing over 6,000 evaluations and studies completed since 1987. This was distributed to all offices and main partners in other United Nations organizations.

44. Monitoring and evaluation officers in regional offices focused their efforts on providing support and training to country offices. Several regional workshops were conducted to improve skills. Regional thematic evaluations considered experiences gained and lessons learned in subjects of specific interest in particular regions and covered a diverse range of topics: health systems revitalization; water, sanitation and guinea worm eradication; education and child rights; successful programmes in nutrition; psycho-social programmes; and alternative forms of basic education for special groups. These evaluations

will contribute to improving the design of future country-level programmes in sectors under review.

45. Global thematic evaluations included a joint study with ATD-Fourth World, an international NGO, identifying appropriate programme strategies for reaching the poorest of the poor. A global evaluation of emergency management revealed considerable improvement since the previous assessment in 1991 and identified further areas for streamlining of emergency procedures. The UNICEF Evaluation and Research Office, jointly with the Harvard Centre for Population Studies, organized a major workshop on the development of strategies for the sustainability of the mid-decade and year 2000 World Summit goals. UNICEF worked with the Population Council to evaluate the role of males and fathers in families as part of achieving gender equality, including a global seminar at the Innocenti Centre (Florence, Italy) to disseminate the results. The subsequent reports are now used throughout UNICEF in the development of new country programmes. A global evaluation of lessons learned from the universal child immunization (UCI 1990) programme provided key input into the process of ensuring sustainability of results achieved. A global study of experience with the Bamako Initiative, including case studies in nine countries, is identifying the best practices and lessons learned and will be finalized in 1996 for distribution to all relevant field offices.

46. UNICEF continued its development of a system for performance assessment to measure more precisely the real achievements of programmes and projects. A prototype is now ready for testing in a limited number of field offices. Based on the experiences of seven country offices, UNICEF has improved its guidelines for country programme evaluations. UNICEF also has a history project to maintain a corporate memory of the organization, including the archiving of important historical documents on policies, Executive Board decisions, monographs of important programme subjects and records of oral interviews with retiring key staff.

C. Strengthening national capacity for management and coordination of international assistance

47. UNICEF recognizes that the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of its operational activities are functions of the capacity of institutions in the programme country to manage the development process effectively and to integrate external support into the national plans. Activities to strengthen such national capacity are an integral part of UNICEF-supported country programmes.

D. Improving national participation in the evaluation of United Nations operational activities

48. UNICEF attaches high priority to national participation in the evaluation of UNICEF-supported programmes and projects. A basic principle of evaluation methodology is that participation in the evaluation of programmes by counterparts in national Governments and subnational institutions is essential for ensuring that the recommended programme corrections and improvements are implemented. In general, the terms of reference for evaluations and operational research undertaken by UNICEF field offices include national participation as an essential element.

E. Promoting greater collaboration in evaluation

49. UNICEF is an active participant in three forums used for inter-agency collaboration on evaluations. The recent report of the JCGP Working Group on Evaluation and Monitoring entitled "Harmonization of monitoring and evaluation" provides the basis for JCGP members to harmonize product formats so as to ensure

a common understanding of concepts and to facilitate the ready sharing of information. The work of this group focuses on project evaluation policies, procedures and products; programme evaluation policies, concepts, terminology and products; and monitoring products for both projects and country programmes. JCGP members also have identified specific and tangible measures to intensify cooperation among them, including the establishment of a system giving each agency computerized access to the evaluation databases of the others, the establishment of a joint consultant roster, joint training in evaluation techniques and the holding of joint evaluation missions.

50. The Inter-Agency Working Group for Evaluation, an informal gathering of the heads of all United Nations system evaluation offices, met in November 1995 to review several important issues: (a) harmonization of monitoring and evaluation in the United Nations system; (b) evaluation of the functioning of multilateral banks; (c) monitoring and evaluation capacity of programme countries; (d) evaluation databases; and (e) experiences with rating systems. Participating organizations are now applying the lessons learned from these reviews. The ACC Subcommittee on Rural Development met in April 1995 to address gender issues in evaluation. It adopted a gender framework for application to future evaluations, and JCGP partners continue the elaboration of common evaluation frameworks for other sectors. This subcommittee meets consecutively with the meeting of the evaluation offices of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, providing an opportunity for productive interaction and the exchange of views on issues of common concern.

F. Scope for improving the cost-effectiveness of administrative services

51. UNICEF is using the introduction of common premises to join with other United Nations partners in promoting optimum effectiveness of administrative services through the introduction of shared services wherever practical and cost-effective. A review of the experiences of introducing shared services in an entirely new facility provided by the Government of South Africa, carried out in collaboration with JCGP partners, can provide the basis of improved guidelines, including a more equitable system of assigning costs.

IV. FOLLOW-UP TO RESOLUTION 1995/56 OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL: HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES

A. Introduction

52. The Executive Director has undertaken a review of UNICEF humanitarian activities, focusing on issues concerning its role and operational responsibilities, as well as the operative and financial capacities to respond, within the UNICEF mandate, in the context of broad and comprehensive humanitarian programmes, bearing in mind section VII of the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182 and the indicative list of issues contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56 of 28 July 1995. UNICEF is participating actively in the inter-agency task force led by the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) and reviewing inter-agency coordination and capacities in the humanitarian sector.

53. UNICEF also has been consulting with the Executive Board on the indicative list of issues annexed to the Council resolutions, and most were discussed at the first regular session of the Board in January 1996. As a basis for that discussion, UNICEF presented two complementary papers, "UNICEF emergency services: mission and strategies" (E/ICEF/1996/4) and "UNICEF emergency

operations" (E/ICEF/1996/7), outlining the role of UNICEF in emergencies. In accordance with Executive Board decision 1996/2 (E/ICEF/1996/12 (Part I)), UNICEF will present a two-paged conceptual framework, including the guiding principles for UNICEF emergency interventions, to the Executive Board at its annual session in June 1996. UNICEF also will present to subsequent sessions of the Board during 1996 and 1997 operational papers on the following issues: (a) rapid response capacity; (b) capacity-building; (c) coordination; (d) niche and comparative advantage; (e) prevention and preparedness; (f) protection of children in conflict situations; (g) emergency processes; and (h) balance between long-term development and emergency assistance. These items are closely interrelated with the indicative list of issues included in resolution 1995/56, and the Executive Board, in its discussions, took these into account in providing its considered views.

B. Role and operational responsibilities in humanitarian assistance

54. The Executive Board, while seeking a clear definition of emergencies, urged UNICEF to respond to all kinds of emergencies, including "silent" and "forgotten" emergencies. The importance of preventive actions was emphasized to prevent "silent" emergencies from becoming "loud" ones. The Board endorsed measures to strengthen preventative actions, including stand-by arrangements and emphasis on sustainable development strategies. The Executive Board also sought clarification on how the UNICEF contribution to humanitarian operations strengthens the overall system-wide response to humanitarian crises.

55. The Executive Board supported the developmental approach taken by UNICEF in dealing with emergencies since sustainable development was essential in preventing emergencies. The Board further recommended a strong linkage between relief and development as well as the need to continue working in post-conflict reconstruction and recovery. It identified the continuum between relief and development as requiring a more comprehensive analysis and an appropriate transitional mechanism. The Executive Board endorsed a four-pronged approach including preventive actions, preparedness, emergency assistance and rehabilitation and recovery assistance.

C. Capacity to respond

Specific measures to strengthen local capacity and coping mechanisms

56. The 1992 multi-donor evaluation of UNICEF, as summarized in document E/ICEF/1993/CRP.7, recommended service delivery, capacity-building, community participation and empowerment as the key strategies for UNICEF programming. The Executive Board was apprised of the premium UNICEF places on strengthening local capacity through enabling the family to ensure the care, protection and security of the child; encouraging communities to assume responsibilities for emergency response and recovery activities; and helping to create national capacity for re-establishing services and overseeing rehabilitation. The Board cited the joint development of common principles and standards of cooperation for the care and family reunification of unaccompanied children by UNICEF, UNHCR, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Save the Children Fund as a good example for developing and strengthening local capacity-building in the context of complex emergencies arising from war and civil conflict. The Executive Board recommended the increased use of local consultants and organizations, not only to contribute to local capacity-building, but also to enhance cost-effectiveness and engender the development process. It further urged the use of existing political and administrative structures for capacity-building, taking into account the provision of training in necessary skills.

Operational and financial capacity to act in a timely and effective manner

57. In compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF works to ensure that children caught in armed conflict retain the basic rights of protection against violence, sexual abuse, abandonment and all forms of human rights violations. In coordination with United Nations partners and humanitarian agencies, UNICEF makes its unique facilities for rapid response available to relieve the suffering of children and those who provide them with care. As part of its management excellence programme, UNICEF is reviewing its finance, supply and communications systems to ensure flexibility and greater capacity for responding to emergencies.

Administrative and other procedures that provide flexibility and facilitate rapid response

58. UNICEF is undertaking a comprehensive review of emergency operating procedures, operational and financial rules, and donor reporting standards. These reviews will support streamlining and improving administrative, personnel and financial rules and procedures as well as reporting systems so as to allow for a more flexible field response in emergency situations.

Delegation of authority to the field level

59. UNICEF is already a highly-decentralized organization, with considerable authority delegated to the country representative. UNICEF is now reviewing its decision-making procedures related to the definition of and response to emergencies in order to clarify lines of authority, accountability and communication among country, regional and headquarters locations as part of the ongoing management excellence programme. Within the inter-agency review process, UNICEF will continue to support the principle of maximum delegation of authority and responsibility to the field level.

D. Resources: mobilization and allocation

60. UNICEF financial capacity during the relief and development phase was discussed at length by the Executive Board. The specific issues raised included: the risk of diverting funds from regular programmes to emergencies and related modalities; the ratio between funds spent on humanitarian and development activities; the funding of the basic package of additional services and greater resource mobilization for countries in need; the heavy burden placed on administrative resources due to increased emergency activities; the need to develop a working system for resource allocation and management at subregional levels as well as across borders; the use of the Emergency Programme Fund to enhance regional capacities; and the need to maintain the delicate balance between relief and development in the allocation of resources.

61. UNICEF also is developing a better recording system for resources received and expended to provide greater transparency and more clearly delineate between emergency and development expenditures. Related to this is the fact that UNICEF encounters a special problem with the continuing demand on it to strengthen its staffing capacity to respond more effectively to emergencies, while at the same time having to keep within mandatory resource limits.

E. Coordination

Working with the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs

62. UNICEF was commended for its demonstrated support for DHA and inter-agency coordination. Collaboration has included the secondment of staff to DHA at headquarters and field levels, support to the Disaster and Management Training

Programme (DMTP) and the Complex Emergency Training Initiative (CETI), and active participation in needs assessment missions and the formulation of consolidated appeals. UNICEF continues to advocate that the Consolidated Appeals Process System accord priority to activities that both save child lives and ensure early recovery.

63. While staff security and working communication systems in emergencies do not come under the purview of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, they are, nevertheless, vital elements of the United Nations system-wide response capacity. UNICEF is collaborating closely with United Nations partners to streamline and strengthen staff security in emergency countries through training, better contingency planning, and managing effective communication and logistics systems. In high-risk security situations, the United Nations Security Coordinator may deem it appropriate to instruct operational agencies to evacuate a country. However, these are often the very situations justifying the continuing presence of UNICEF to cater for the needs of affected populations. This apparent difference in perception of security roles should be addressed.

Working with other partners: the development of memoranda of understanding

64. Consolidation of partnership arrangements is an essential basis for effective collaborative action and a priority for UNICEF in strengthening its emergency response capacity. UNICEF is well advanced on the development of memoranda of understanding with UNHCR and WFP and has initiated discussions on the subject with WHO and UNESCO. In addition, UNICEF is developing stand-by agreements for collaborative action with centres of excellence and a new standard agreement prototype for cooperation with NGOs at the field level is being finalized. The Executive Board complimented these efforts and urged further strengthening of coordination with mutually supportive United Nations agencies, the donor community and ICRC as well as a formalizing of partnerships with NGOs.

F. Evaluation and training

65. As part of the overall UNICEF management excellence process, UNICEF is working in partnership with other United Nations agencies to improve and strengthen assessment procedures in order to provide a better basis for planning, monitoring and evaluation. The improved capacity of the Office of Emergency Programmes to coordinate communications between emergency field operations and the Emergency Operations Centre in New York also has made it possible to share communications and situation reports with DHA and the United Nations Department of Peace-keeping Operations.

66. Internally, through its comprehensive training programme, UNICEF has embarked on measures to enhance staff emergency capacity, both managerial and technical. UNICEF also is revising its staff rules in support of inter-agency initiatives to promote the codes of conduct in tandem with standards of professionalism. Increased efforts are under way to enhance knowledge and skills in-house. UNICEF has been cooperating closely with DMTP and in the development of CETI. UNICEF has invited other United Nations partners in emergency response, including UNHCR, WFP and DHA, to participate in emergency management workshops and provided trainers for the courses held by others. The Executive Board urged UNICEF to strengthen further the capacity of its staff and partners to be better prepared to respond in times of crisis.

V. EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTION

67. The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report.